

Capitalization

676.1

Proper Nouns and Adjectives

Capitalize all proper nouns and all proper adjectives. A proper noun is the name of a particular person, place, thing, or idea. A proper adjective is an adjective formed from a proper noun.

Common Noun: country, president, continent

Proper Noun: Canada, Andrew Jackson, Asia

Proper Adjective: Canadian, Jacksonian, Asian

676.2

Names of People

Capitalize the names of people and also the initials or abbreviations that stand for those names.

Samuel L. Jackson Aung San Suu Kyi

Mary Sanchez-Gomez

676.3

Titles Used with Names

Capitalize titles used with names of persons; also capitalize abbreviations standing for those titles.

President Mohammed Hosni Mubarak Dr. Linda Trout

Governor Michael Easley Rev. Jim Zavaski

Senator John McCain

676.4

Words Used as Names

Capitalize words such as *mother*, *father*, *aunt*, and *uncle* when these words are used as names.

Uncle Marius started to sit on the couch. (*Uncle* is a name; the speaker calls this person "Uncle Marius.")

Then Uncle stopped in midair. (*Uncle* is used as a name.)

"So, Mom, what are you doing here?" I asked. (*Mom* is used as a name.)

Words such as *aunt*, *uncle*, *mom*, *dad*, *grandma*, and *grandpa* are usually not capitalized if they come after a possessive pronoun (*my*, *his*, *our*).

My aunt had just called him. (The word *aunt* describes this person but is not used as a name.)

Then my dad and mom walked into the room. (The words *dad* and *mom* are not used as names in this sentence.)



Practice

Capitalization 1

- Proper Nouns and Adjectives
- Names of People
- Titles Used with Names
- Words Used as Names



For each of the following sentences, correctly write the words that should be capitalized but are not.

Example: Yesterday grandpa told me he'd never seen the american capital.

Grandpa, American

1. A nickname people often use when talking about the united states government is uncle sam.
2. A former congressperson from new york, secretary of state hillary clinton, is married to a former president.
3. From 1993 to 2009, the two men who held the highest office in the country were president william clinton and president george w. bush.
4. In england and canada, queen elizabeth II has reigned since the 1950s.
5. Canada's governor general Michaëlle Jean represents the queen, who is the country's head of state.
6. After the 2006 election, prime minister Stephen Harper became the head of the canadian government.
7. Uncle Richard, who is mom's brother, lives in montreal, quebec.
8. One summer, grandma and I visited him.
9. Uncle Rich introduced mom to a friend of his, dr. sylvia hill, and they keep in touch with e-mail.

Next Step: Write two or three sentences that include the name of a person, a title used with a name, and a word used as a person's name. Also include a proper adjective. Use correct capitalization.